

CLAIMS:

1. An electronic commerce system, comprising:
 - a user terminal operable by a user, the user terminal including a display;
 - a first storage unit operable to store image data of commodities for sale to the user;
 - a second storage unit operable to store image data of backgrounds;
 - a first acquisition unit operable to acquire content data of one of the commodities and one of the backgrounds selected by the user via the user terminal;
 - a second acquisition unit operable to acquire image data of the one commodity from the first storage unit and image data of the one background from the second storage unit;
 - a graphics unit operable to produce a display image by combining an image of the one commodity created from the image data of the one commodity and an image of the one background created from the image data of the one background; and
 - a supply unit operable to supply the display image to the user terminal, thereby enabling the display image to be displayed on the display.
2. An electronic commerce system according to Claim 1, wherein the graphics unit includes a unit for incorporating a scale image into the display image.
3. An electronic commerce system according to Claim 1, wherein the graphics unit includes a unit for rotating the image of the one commodity.
4. An electronic commerce system according to Claim 1, wherein the graphics unit includes a unit for changing a viewpoint for the image of the one commodity.
5. An electronic commerce system according to Claim 1, further comprising another acquisition unit operable to acquire from the user terminal custom image data of a background prepared by the user and to store the custom image data in the second storage unit.
6. An electronic commerce system according to Claim 5, further comprising an adjustment unit operable to adjust a

scale of the custom image data prepared by the user.

7. An electronic commerce system according to Claim 1, wherein the user terminal is a mobile communication terminal.

8. An electronic commerce system, comprising:

- a user terminal operable by a user, the user terminal including a display; and

- a commodity purchase assistance apparatus connected to the user terminal via a network, the commodity purchase assistance apparatus including:

 - a first storage unit operable to store image data of commodities for sale to the user;

 - a second storage unit operable to store image data of backgrounds;

 - a first acquisition unit operable to acquire content data of one of the commodities and one of the backgrounds selected by the user via the user terminal;

 - a second acquisition unit operable to acquire image data of the one commodity from the first storage unit and image data of the one background from the second storage unit;

 - a graphics unit operable to produce a display image by combining an image of the one commodity created from the image data of the one commodity and an image of the one background created from the image data of the one background; and

 - a supply unit operable to supply the display image to the user terminal, thereby enabling the display image to be displayed on the display.

9. An electronic commerce system according to Claim 8, wherein the commodity purchase assistance apparatus further includes a unit operable to allow the commodity purchase assistance apparatus to function as a server.

10. An electronic commerce system according to Claim 8, wherein the user terminal further includes a transmitter unit operable to transmit to the commodity purchase assistance apparatus a request to purchase a commodity corresponding to the display image displayed on the display.

11. An electronic commerce system according to Claim 10, wherein the commodity purchase assistance apparatus further

includes a unit operable to make an arrangement for delivering the commodity when the request for purchasing the commodity is transmitted thereto from the user terminal.

12. An electronic commerce system, comprising:

a user terminal operable by a user, the user terminal including a display;

a first storage unit operable to store image data of commodities for sale to the user;

a second storage unit operable to store image data of backgrounds; and

a commodity purchase assistance apparatus connected to the user terminal and the first and second storage units via a network or a cable, the commodity purchase assistance apparatus including:

a first acquisition unit operable to acquire content data of one of the commodities and one of the backgrounds selected by the user via the user terminal;

a second acquisition unit operable to acquire image data of the one commodity from the first storage unit and image data of the one background from the second storage unit;

a graphics unit operable to produce a display image by combining an image of the one commodity created from the image data of the one commodity and an image of the one background created from the image data of the one background; and

a supply unit operable to supply the display image to the user terminal, thereby enabling the display image to be displayed on the display.

13. A commodity purchase assistance apparatus connected via a network to a user terminal operable by a user and including a display, comprising:

a first storage unit operable to store image data of commodities for sale to the user;

a second storage unit operable to store image data of backgrounds;

a first acquisition unit operable to acquire content data of one of the commodities and one of the backgrounds selected by the user via the user terminal;

a second acquisition unit operable to acquire image data of the one commodity from the first storage unit and image data of the one background from the second storage unit;

a graphics unit operable to produce a display image by combining an image of the one commodity created from the image data of the one commodity and an image of the one background created from the image data of the one background; and

a supply unit operable to supply the display image to the user terminal, thereby enabling the display image to be displayed on the display.

14. A commodity purchase assistance apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein the graphics unit includes a unit for incorporating a scale image into the display image.

15. A commodity purchase assistance apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein the graphics unit includes a unit for rotating the image of the one commodity.

16. A commodity purchase assistance apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein the graphics unit includes a unit for changing a viewpoint for the image of the one commodity.

17. A commodity purchase assistance apparatus according to Claim 13, further comprising another acquisition unit operable to acquire from the user terminal custom image data of a background prepared by the user and to store the custom image data in the second storage unit.

18. A commodity purchase assistance apparatus according to Claim 17, further comprising an adjustment unit operable to adjust a scale of the custom image data prepared by the user.

19. A commodity purchase assistance apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein the image data of the one background is stored in advance in the second storage unit or supplied from the user terminal.

20. A commodity purchase assistance apparatus according to Claim 13, further comprising a unit operable to allow the commodity purchase assistance apparatus to function as a server.

21. A terminal operable by a user, the terminal being connected via a network to a storage device operable to store

image data of commodities for sale to the user and to store image data of backgrounds, comprising:

a display;

a unit operable by the user to select one of the commodities and one of the backgrounds;

an acquisition unit operable to acquire image data of the one commodity and image data of the one background from the storage device;

a graphics unit operable to produce a display image by combining an image of the one commodity created from the image data of the one commodity and an image of the one background created from the image data of the one background; and

a unit operable to display the display image on the display.

22. A terminal operable by a user, the terminal being connected via a network to a storage device operable to store image data of commodities for sale to the user, comprising:

a display;

a storage unit operable to store image data of backgrounds;

a unit operable by the user to select one of the commodities and one of the backgrounds;

an acquisition unit operable to acquire image data of the one commodity from the storage device and image data of the one background from the storage unit;

a graphics unit operable to produce a display image by combining an image of the one commodity created from the image data of the one commodity and an image of the one background created from the image data of the one background; and

a unit operable to display the display image on the display.

23. A method using a computer for assisting a user in purchasing a commodity, the method comprising:

acquiring content data of a particular commodity and a background selected by the user via a user terminal;

acquiring image data corresponding to the particular

commodity and image data corresponding to the selected background from a storage unit;

producing a display image by combining an image of the particular commodity and an image of the selected background from the acquired image data; and

displaying the display image on a display of the user terminal.

24. A method according to Claim 23, further comprising storing image data of a background prepared by the user in the storage unit.

25. A method according to Claim 24, further comprising adjusting a scale of the image data of the background prepared by the user.

26. A commodity purchase assistance apparatus, comprising:

a commodity information database;

means for producing a composite image by combining an image of a commodity and an image of a background in accordance with information about the commodity and the background selected by a user based on the database; and

means for supplying the composite image via a network to a terminal operable by the user, thereby enabling the composite image to be displayed on a display of the terminal.

27. An electronic commerce system having a commodity purchase assistance capability, comprising:

a server including:

a commodity information database; and

means for producing a composite image by combining an image of a commodity and an image of a background in accordance with information about the commodity and the background selected by a user based on the database; and

a terminal operable by the user to view the composite image and to transmit a request to purchase the commodity.

28. An electronic commerce system having a commodity purchase assistance capability and having a first apparatus connected to a network and a second apparatus connected to the

network and operable by a user, wherein the first apparatus comprises:

means for producing a composite image by combining an image of a commodity and an image of a background;

means for transmitting the composite image to the second apparatus; and

means for producing information needed to make an arrangement for delivering the commodity to the user in response to a request from the user for purchasing the commodity.